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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2471
INFO RUEHBE/AMEMBASSY BELIZE 1249
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN 5388
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN 3515
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON 8327
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE 3358
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN 4520
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO 2636
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS NASSAU 000674

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STATE FOR WHA/CAR WBENT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KUNR](#) [OPDC](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNGA](#) [BF](#)

SUBJECT: UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL: BAHAMAS CALLS FOR
CONSISTENCY IN ASSESSING CANDIDATES

REF: A. STATE 56707

[1](#)B. STATE 55461

[1](#)1. DCM delivered the Secretary's letter outlining the U.S. pledge to support only countries with credible human rights records for the new UN Human Rights Council to Marilyn Zonicle, MFA Acting Permanent Secretary, on April 19, for delivery to Foreign Minister Fred Mitchell.

[1](#)2. Zonicle emphasized The Bahamas' desire for the Human Rights Council to be a revitalized body that will make a real difference in the promotion and respect of human rights around the world. She expressed her disappointment that the Human Rights Commission had not been able to discipline the conduct of its members to avoid unhelpful obstructionist behavior, and underscored her hope that the Council would achieve better results. The DCM pointed out that only by electing members who respected human rights could this failing be avoided in the Council.

[1](#)3. Zonicle asked how the U.S. planned to determine which countries it could support and how it would delineate which candidates had a "genuine commitment to human rights" and which did not. DCM pointed Zonicle to the criteria in the Secretary's letter and the international human rights

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standards and commitments she cited, which collectively present a clear picture of the most important characteristics. Zonicle was not optimistic that a clear line could be drawn between acceptable candidates and non-acceptable ones, raising Egypt as an example of a country that would not meet many of these standards but could be elected to the Council. She believed the process would remain subjective, and hoped to have a clearer idea of how the U.S. would determine who to support and who to exclude, before she would recommend that the Bahamian government make a similar public pledge.

[1](#)4. Zonicle indicated that The Bahamas has already received a number of formal requests for support from countries she said "will not meet your standards." (NOTE: The Cuban Ambassador to The Bahamas has publicly requested Bahamian support for Cuba's candidacy. END NOTE.) Zonicle was not willing to suggest whether The Bahamas would support or reject the Cuban bid, though she personally acknowledged that Cuba suffered many human rights shortcomings.

